1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

should never have had intercourse with any of her husband's clan except those who are properly her husbands. If this explanation were the correct one, the prohibition would seem to be directed against practices resembling communal marriage, and would be interesting evidence in favour of the existence of this type of marriage, since there are no prohibitions against what does not exist nor has ever existed. As I have said, however, I think it very unlikely that the prohibition is to be interpreted in this way, but I regret very greatly that it did not occur to me to inquire carefully into this point on the spot. 835

So far as I could tell, the laxity in sexual matters is equally great before and after marriage. If a girl who has been married in infancy, but has not yet joined her husband, should become pregnant, the husband would be called upon to give the bow and arrow at the *pursiitpimi* ceremony and would be the father of the child, even if he were still a young boy, or if it were known that he was not the father of the child. I only heard of one case in recent times in which an unmarried girl had become pregnant. In this case a man who was a *matchuni* of the woman was called in to give the bow and arrow, but he did not regard himself as married to the woman and did not live with her. That some stigma was attached to the occurrence may possibly be shown by the fact that this woman remained unmarried for some years, and then only married a man who was certainly below the general standard of the Todas in intelligence. The child, a daughter, of the woman died soon after birth, so that I had no chance of ascertaining whether the irregularity of her birth would have had any influence on her position in Toda society. If, however, a child is born without the *pursiitpimi* ceremony having been performed, it is called *padmokh* and an indelible disgrace attaches to it throughout life. 836 851 848 626

From any point of view, and certainly from the point of view of the savage, the sexual morality of the Todas among themselves is very low. It is an interesting subject of speculation how far this laxity is the result of the practice of polyandry, for since low sexual morality brings in its train various factors which tend to sterility, we may have here, as 181 831

13: Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW60 Toda AW60

which can often last for nearly an hour. The relatives now depart and return to the village, leaving the man and woman to cook themselves a meal. They return later, however, and all spend the night together in the *shola*, before going back to the *mad* in the morning, when a feast, open to visitors as well, is held.

Performance of the *pursütpimi* ceremony determines once and for all the fatherhood of all children borne by a woman. It need not be repeated as long as it is desired that the same man should continue to be the father of other children brought into the world by the woman. Thus, dead men can well be considered the parent of later offspring, and will continue to be looked upon as such, unless a new *pursütpimi* ceremony with another man be performed.

In most cases it is the husband who is called upon to give the bow and arrow; in the case of a plurality of husbands, one of them, not necessarily the eldest, will do so, and it is not customary to repeat it with another one of the husbands when once done by one of them. That is why men who have failed for one reason or another to procreate children, will preferably carry off the pregnant wives of others, so that when they go through with the ceremony, they will, all the same, become fathers. This was the case with the famous Toda Kuriolv (22) who, having become impotent from a wound received from a buffalo which he caught in his youth at a Toda funeral, was, nevertheless, able to have legal heirs even if they were not his own physiological sons. In cases of pregnancy having been brought about by intermoiety concubinage, a man of the same division as the woman is obliged to give the bow and arrow when she reaches her seventh month, should no one have done this for her before. The child would otherwise be illegitimate, something unheard of with the Todas.

In accordance with this system of legally determining paternity, the legitimacy of the children is assured, as no case is known in which a man could not be found to perform the *pursütpimi* ceremony for a pregnant woman. Even in instances of premarital impregnation, the girl having been "married" at an early stage to her *mutchuni*, even if the latter is not available for some reason to give her the bow and arrow, some other suitable male partner will always be found for her.

When a woman is carried away from her husband or husbands to become the wife of another man or group of men, and is subsequently compensated for by a fixed amount of buffaloes, the proceedings are not considered by the Todas to be those of a divorce. With them, that is something quite different, with a decidedly disparaging connotation

13: Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW60 Toda AW60

to note that there "are many more irregular liaisons, not provided by overt institutions, and indeed punishable by fines if discovered". Of course, with a system of child-marriage and of socially determined paternity through the *pursütpimi* ceremony, both of which to a large extent guard against the danger of illegitimate births, the fear of begetting children out of wedlock is much less than in other cultures, and consequently does not act as much as a deterrant here, with the Todas, as it would, I suppose, elsewhere.

In spite of careful questioning and observation, I could find no cases of impotence with men or of frigidity with women. Kuriolv, as recorded earlier (see above, p. 259), was evidently an exception in this regard, but his was a physiological impotence, due to a past accident while catching a buffalo at a funeral, and cannot, therefore, be considered as contradicting these findings.

B. SPECIAL STUDY: MELGARSH

This special study of the Melgarsh mund of the Todas of the Nilgiris has already been published in part in *Drives, Affects, Behaviour*, Edited by Rudolph M. Loewenstein, M.D. at the International Universities Press, Inc., New York, 1953. It is, however, elaborated in what follows with special emphasis on the anthropological description of polyandry within one family unit; observation of the children's behaviour is the subject of an addendum.

1. THE MELGARSH CLAN

The Melgarsh clan belongs to the Tardharsh moiety, but it differs in many ways from the others of its kind. Because of this, it appeared to W. H. R. Rivers as intermediate between Tardharsh and Teivilkh, and he even put the hypothesis forward, denied, however, by the Todas, that originally it may have belonged to the latter half of the tribe.

It is not necessary here to go into all the differences that put Melgarsh at variance with the other Tardharsh clans; readers interested in the subject are referred to Rivers' book. Suffice it to say that the Melgarsh people enjoy special privileges in connection with the dairy-temples – such as supplying *wursols* and *kaltmokhs* (the latter, attendants of the *palol*), taking food and buttermilk in the sacred enclosures of the *timad* – the exclusive right of milking a buffalo to provide milk for a

To 595 one another's wives, and it happens that they can even retain such a woman they have stolen from other families, if they pay compensation to the husbands. This goes on continually and one sees some women who have been to three or four families in turn. The Todas do not seem to be any *more jealous than* the Tibetans, but perhaps this very laxity gives an outlet for jealousy, since they can steal one another's women, so that this does not appear to be a good instance for the study of jealousy among a polyandrous people.

To 837 595 764 There are numerous extra-marital relations, which are tolerated as long as they take place among Todas. At the funeral of a Toda woman, it is curious to note that there is one individual who officiates in addition to the husbands, and usually he is supposed to be the official lover of the woman. This looks peculiar, since they have it only in a ritual, and it may indicate that they once practised non-fraternal polyandry and that this official lover who officiates together with the husbands is perhaps only a survival of a non-fraternal mate.

To 836 586 848 Pre-nuptial relations are forbidden among both men and women, and there are never any illegitimate children among the Todas, as they are always born within one family (since "marriage" takes place in infancy) and considered legitimate. The men alone are allowed to divorce, but women may never do so. The usual ground for divorce is that they have stolen one another's wives. The only case in which a woman is divorced with ignominy is if she has had relations with a non-Toda. In that case, she is driven from her home, her hair cut, and usually tied to a buffalo with coconuts attached to its neck, after being beaten by the community.

To 595 The impression I got was that Toda polyandry was loose and decadent, and that, today, we see only the remnants of a former, more efficient type of polyandrous organization.

000 *Tiya Polyandry.* The Tiyas, living in